

## § 17.130

Department of Veterans Affairs expense has been established.

[39 FR 1844, Jan. 15, 1974. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996]

### **§ 17.130 Payment for treatment dependent upon preference prohibited.**

No reimbursement or payment of services not previously authorized will be made when such treatment was procured through private sources in preference to available Government facilities.

[39 FR 1844, Jan. 15, 1974. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996]

### **§ 17.131 Payment of abandoned claims prohibited.**

Any informal claim for the payment or reimbursement of medical expenses which is not followed by a formal claim, or any formal claim which is not followed by necessary supporting evidence, within 1 year from the date of the request for a formal claim or supporting evidence shall be deemed abandoned, and payment or reimbursement shall not be authorized on the basis of such abandoned claim or any future claim for the same expenses. For the purpose of this section, time limitations shall be computed from the date following the date of request for a formal claim or supporting evidence.

[33 FR 19012, Dec. 20, 1968. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996]

### **§ 17.132 Appeals.**

When any claim for payment or reimbursement of expenses of medical care or services rendered in non-Department of Veterans Affairs facilities or from non-Department of Veterans Affairs resources has been disallowed, the claimant shall be notified of the reasons for the disallowance and of the right to initiate an appeal to the Board of Veterans Appeals by filing a Notice of Disagreement, and shall be furnished such other notices or statements as are required by part 19 of this chapter, governing appeals.

[33 FR 19012, Dec. 20, 1968. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996]

## 38 CFR Ch. I (7–1–15 Edition)

### RECONSIDERATION OF DENIED CLAIMS

#### **§ 17.133 Procedures.**

(a) *Scope.* This section sets forth reconsideration procedures regarding claims for benefits administered by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These procedures apply to claims for VHA benefits regarding decisions that are appealable to the Board of Veterans' Appeals (e.g., reimbursement for non-VA care not authorized in advance, reimbursement for beneficiary travel expenses, reimbursement for home improvements or structural alterations, etc.). These procedures do not apply when other regulations providing reconsideration procedures do apply (this includes CHAMPVA (38 CFR 17.270 through 17.278) and spina bifida (38 CFR 17.904) and any other regulations that contain reconsideration procedures). Also, these procedures do not apply to decisions made outside of VHA, such as decisions made by the Veterans Benefits Administration and adopted by VHA for decisionmaking. These procedures are not mandatory, and a claimant may choose to appeal the denied claim to the Board of Veterans' Appeals pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 7105 without utilizing the provisions of this section. Submitting a request for reconsideration shall constitute a notice of disagreement for purposes of filing a timely notice of disagreement under 38 U.S.C. 7105(b).

(b) *Process.* An individual who disagrees with the initial decision denying the claim in whole or in part may obtain reconsideration under this section by submitting a reconsideration request in writing to the Director of the healthcare facility of jurisdiction within one year of the date of the initial decision. The reconsideration decision will be made by the immediate supervisor of the initial VA decision-maker. The request must state why it is concluded that the decision is in error and must include any new and relevant information not previously considered. Any request for reconsideration that does not identify the reason for the dispute will be returned to the sender without further consideration. The request for reconsideration may include

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a request for a meeting with the immediate supervisor of the initial VA decision-maker, the claimant, and the claimant's representative (if the claimant wishes to have a representative present). Such a meeting shall only be for the purpose of discussing the issues and shall not include formal procedures (e.g., presentation, cross-examination of witnesses, etc.). The meeting will be taped and transcribed by VA if requested by the claimant and a copy of the transcription shall be provided to the claimant. After reviewing the matter, the immediate supervisor of the initial VA decision-maker shall issue a written decision that affirms, reverses, or modifies the initial decision.

NOTE TO §17.133: The final decision of the immediate supervisor of the initial VA decision-maker will inform the claimant of further appellate rights for an appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

(The Office of Management and Budget has approved the information collection requirements in this section under control number 2900-0600)

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 511, 38 U.S.C. 7105)

[64 FR 44660, Aug. 17, 1999]

### DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY

#### § 17.140 Authority to adjudicate reimbursement claims.

The Department of Veterans Affairs medical installation having responsibility for the fee basis program in the region or territory (including the Republic of the Philippines) served by such medical installation shall adjudicate all claims for the payment or reimbursement of the expenses of services not previously authorized rendered in the region or territory.

[39 FR 1844, Jan. 15, 1974. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996]

#### § 17.141 Authority to adjudicate foreign reimbursement claims.

The Health Administration Center in Denver, CO, shall adjudicate claims for the payment or reimbursement of the expenses of services not previously authorized rendered in any foreign country except the Republic of the Phil-

ippines which will be referred to the VA Outpatient Clinic in Pasay City.

[39 FR 1844, Jan. 15, 1974, as amended at 45 FR 6938, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996; 74 FR 30228, June 25, 2009]

#### § 17.142 Authority to approve sharing agreements, contracts for scarce medical specialist services and contracts for other medical services.

The Under Secretary for Health is delegated authority to enter into

(a) Sharing agreements authorized under 38 U.S.C. 8153 and § 17.240;

(b) Contracts with schools and colleges of medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, podiatry, optometry, and nursing, clinics, and any other group or individual capable of furnishing such services to provide scarce medical specialist services at Department of Veterans Affairs health care facilities (including, but not limited to, services of physicians, dentists, podiatrists, optometrists, nurses, physicians' assistants, expanded function dental auxiliaries, technicians, and other medical support personnel); and

(c) When a sharing agreement or contract for scarce medical specialist services is not warranted, contracts authorized under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 8153 for medical and ancillary services. The authority under this section generally will be exercised by approval of proposed contracts or agreements negotiated at the health care facility level. Such approval, however, will not be necessary in the case of any purchase order or individual authorization for which authority has been delegated in 48 CFR 801.670-3. All such contracts and agreements will be negotiated pursuant to 48 CFR chapters 1 and 8.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 512, 7409, 8153)

[45 FR 6938, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996, as amended at 62 FR 17072, Apr. 9, 1997; 79 FR 54616, Sept. 12, 2014]

### PROSTHETIC, SENSORY, AND REHABILITATIVE AIDS

#### § 17.148 Service dogs.

(a) *Definitions.* For the purposes of this section: